(c) if so, whether Government have examined this report; and

(d) to what extent they are aggreeable to the claim made by the European Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) While the European Commission's proposals for modalities for negotiations on agriculture submitted to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) contain some provisions for special and differential treatment for developing countries like India, including creation of a food security box, they do not adequately address India's interests and concerns in the on-going negotiations which include safeguarding food and livelihood security concerns, minimal market access for agricultural products, creating opportunities for export of agricultural surpluses as well as substantial reduction in all forms of trade-distorting domestic support and export subsidies provided by the developed countries. The negotiations are scheduled to be concluded by 1 January, 2005.

Duty free entry for specified products into the U.S.

2481. SHRI ARJUN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has pressed Washington to bring 850 additional agricultural, chemical and pharmaceutical items within the purview of the Generalised System of Preferences Scheme which allows duty free entry for specified products into the US market;

(b) if so, whether at present a total 1,500 Indian export products are eligible for concessions under the scheme which is renewed every two years; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the US Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir. India has

requested USA for restoration of GSP on all eligible agricultural, chemical and pharmaceutical products.

(b) The U.S. GSP programme provides preferential duty-free entry for more than 4,650 products from designated beneficiary countries. The GSP programme has been renewed and extended upto September 30, 2006.

(c) Indian request is under active consideration of the Government of United States.

Free flow of drugs in developing countries

2482. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether WTO is yet to find ways to offer cheaper drugs;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the failure of the WTO to come to a common agreement which could offer cheaper medicines to developing countries; and

(c) the steps proposed to-be taken to ensure the free flow of drugs without any hindrance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Paragraph 6 of Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement & Public Health provided a mandate to the TRIPS Council to address the problem of countries with insufficient or no manufacturing capacities in the pharmaceutical sector in making effective use of compulsory licensing under the TRIPS Agreement by the end of 2002. The Chairman, TRIPS Council had proposed a Draft Waiver Decision on 18 December, 2002 to address the problem highlighted in paragraph 6 of Doha Declaration. Consensus could not be achieved in the TRIPS Council on the draft decision proposed by the Chairman, TRIPS Council. The United States proposed restrictive disease coverage under the Draft Waiver Decision. This was not agreeable to the developing countries and the Africa group. WTO Members have not been able to resolve this issue as yet.